

CHRISTIAN MESSENGER.

"HOW BEAUTIFUL UPON THE MOUNTAINS, ARE THE FEET OF HIM THAT BRINGETH GOOD TIDINGS, THAT PUBLISHETH PEACE."—Isa. lii, 7.

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FOR THE CHRISTIAN MESSENGER.

REVIEW

Of a book, entitled "LECTURES ON UNIVERSALISM:" By JOEL PARKER, Pastor of the third Presbyterian Church, Rochester. "Buy the truth and sell it not." Printed at Rochester by Elisha Loomis—pp. 126 12 mo.

(Continued from page 50.)

Mr. P. in p. 17, quotes from Mark iii. 29, as follows: "But he that shall blaspheme against the Holy Ghost, hath never forgiveness, but is in danger of eternal damnation." Now I ask, how it is possible that any one should be in danger of eternal damnation if there be no such thing? Now I will quote the preceding verse,—"Verily I say unto you, All sins shall be forgiven unto the sons of men, and blasphemies wherewithsoever they shall blaspheme." Pray, Mr. P. if this be true, how can any man be punished for any sins, except the sin of blasphemy mentioned in the 29th verse? And when it is stated expressly, in that verse, that the blasphemer while in a state in which he is not forgiven, is only in danger of what you suppose means future punishment, what evidence have you from this passage, that there will be any future punishment? This is the last passage that an orthodox man should venture to touch. It teaches the salvation of all men, when properly translated, beyond dispute.

As this passage is frequently misunderstood, I will state, farther, that the rendering the Greek negative *ouk*, NEVER, when it should be rendered *not*, is an absurdity. It should read, "hath not," in the present tense, "forgiveness." See Mark vi. 19. "Therefore Herodias had a quarrel against him, [John] and would have killed him; but she could not." In the original *ouk*. Now render this negative *never*, in this passage, and consult the connexion, and you will learn that Herodias subsequently procured John's death. The words *aiwniou kriseos*, rendered "eternal damnation," do not signify any such thing, neither do the Scriptures contain any terms synonymous with the definition given to the English phrase "eternal damnation." Mr. P. in p. 12, sneeringly asserts, that "Universalist preachers scarcely know the Greek alphabet." If his courage shall prove equal to his impertinence, and he will venture to show himself in the columns of this paper in defence of his absurdities, he can measure his profundity with the a, b, c, ignorance of his opponents. If he comes, let him remember the fate of Goliath, and put his armor on his forehead.

Mr. P. has attempted to deceive his readers. Proof. He misquoted Matt. xii. 31, 32. And in pages 57, 58, in support of his hypothesis, that the penalty of the Law is future endless punishment, he has introduced the subject of the overthrow of the Egyptians in the Red Sea, and the song of Moses on that occasion, and adds, "Thus the apostle John represents to us, that the same kind of scene will be acted over again with a far deeper interest." Mr. P. then quotes from Rev. xv. 3, 4, "Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou king of saints—who shall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name? for thou only art holy." Here he stops short. He was careful, contrary to his usual custom, to omit the refer-

ence, that the reader should not readily refer to the Bible and detect the imposition. Mr. P. calls this song, "The song of redeeming mercy and vindictive justice." Reader, you shall have the whole song, the song of Moses, and the song of the Lamb. Mr. P., did not relish the song of the Lamb; it did not suit his "vindictive justice." Here it is,—"For all nations shall come and worship before thee, for thy judgements are made manifest." This is a song that all honest, humble believers, will rejoice to sing. "Who shall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name?" In the words of the Psalmist, (xcvi,) "O sing unto the Lord a new song; sing unto the Lord all the earth. Sing unto the Lord, bless his name; show forth his salvation from day to day. Let the heavens rejoice, and let the earth be glad; let the sea roar, and the fulness thereof. Let the field be joyful, and all that is therein; then shall all the trees of the wood rejoice before the Lord; for he cometh, for he cometh to judge the earth: he shall judge the world with righteousness, and the people with his truth." (See Ephes. i. 13.) Where, Mr. P., is your "vindictive justice?" Does not this song grate upon your feelings? Will you not gnash your teeth, to see the prey delivered from the fangs of orthodox cruelty and malice? Sir, have you ever read in your Bible that Christ hath ascended up on high? That he hath led captivity captive? That he hath obtained gifts for men: yea, even for the rebellious, that God the Lord might dwell with them? If not, search your bible, and you will find it. Shed no more crocodile-tears for poor sinners, whom you have previously consigned to your endless hell, by vile and wicked perversions of the revelation of a merciful Heaven. No, Sir, no more of this, but deal justly, and not deceitfully with the truths of God.

Mr. P. acknowledges, p. 25, that he has resorted to "Edwards against Chauncey" for information to frame his philippic against Universalism. It is the Bible I shall resort to. Mr. P. may call to his aid the whole orthodox fraternity. It is not Mr. P. it appears, but Dr. Edwards. It is not the gospel of salvation, but Dr. Chauncey's peculiar notions, which Mr. P. would palm upon the public.

In page 15, in remarking on passages supposed to favor the doctrine of the salvation of all men, Mr. P. says, "Again 1st Tim. ii. 4. is quoted, where it is said that God will have all men to be saved, and come to the knowledge of the truth. To this, I reply, God is often said to will things which never come to pass." I challenge Mr. P. to produce one solitary instance, to prove his impious assertion. The reader can judge of Mr. P.'s way of getting out of a difficulty. In the same page, Mr. P. says, "The 16th verse, of the 15th chapter of 1st of Corinthians, is often quoted as a proof of the doctrine of Universal Salvation. For as in Adam all die, so in Christ shall all be made alive." Leaving out a little, as usual from this class of texts. What, reader, do you imagine that this profound, modest, and very pious gentleman said, on this occasion? Why, that "Neither the salvation of saints or sinners is hinted at in the text—the text plainly speaks of the resurrection of the body, nothing else." Ah, Mr. P., are you sure of that, that there is not so much as a hint, on the one hand, and that something is plainly spoken of on the

other, when it is not even mentioned? I will state, for the information of Mr. P., that the phrase, "*resurrection of the body*," is not to be found in the whole Bible. I fancy Mr. P. from habit, sometimes mistakes orthodox books for the Bible. I can no other way account for his blunders.

In Lecture 3, p. 18, Mr. P. says of Christ, "He forgives the vilest sinner without one reproachful word, only tenderly exhorting him to sin no more; while at the same time he assures the most unexceptionable moralist, who is destitute of true piety, that he cannot escape the damnation of hell." Reader, this is not true; if I should call it by the right name, it would be uncivil, so I will pass on. I feel myself really puzzled to account for the orthodox dislike to the unexceptionable moral man, by any reason that would appear reasonable, and, at the same time, be to their credit. This damning, orthodox fashion, the sober, honest, kind, benevolent, and amiable part of the world, and saving the greatest scoundrels who have ever disgraced humanity, and this plan too, their favorite one, argues not much in favor of the goodness, and delicacy of their taste, in the choice of their future companions. Will Mr. P. condescend to inform me what chapter contains Christ's assurance, that the most unexceptionable moralist, who is destitute of true piety, cannot escape the damnation of hell? I shall wait for a reply.

I will relate a short narrative for the edification of the reader. A gentleman now living in Massachusetts, who has followed the sea, for a profession, being in this city about twelve years ago, and conversing with me on the subject of foreign missions, said, "A few years since, I was out in my ship to the Bay of Bengal, (I think that was the place,) and my mate, or first officer, was taken very sick of a fever. Being apprehensive of danger to the sick man and crew, from the confined air in my vessel, I removed my sick mate on shore, and placed him in the house, and under the care of an old widow woman. I visited my mate daily, and was gratified in witnessing the care and attention of his nurse, who omitted nothing that, in her estimation, could operate as a curative. But one day while on a visit to my mate, I observed the old lady very busily employed in bathing the sick man with a decoction of herbs, and manifesting a mother's anxiety and tenderness. I informed her of what passed in my mind, and of my surprise to receive in the person of my mate, such marked acts of kindness from a stranger, one too, of a different religion, and accounted by the divines of my own country as a heathen. Ah, Sir, replied the old lady, I have a son, about this young man's age, who is now absent by sea in a foreign land, and who knows but he may be sick, and receiving the same kind attentions from a stranger? "And this woman," said he, "is said to be doomed to a hell, and our missionaries are sent to convert these heathen. I have sometimes thought, that it would be well, if they should send missionaries here."—Wan't this man a Universalist? No! He had previously argued against the doctrine, but candor obliged him to give me the above narrative, and also to express his opinion. To return to Mr. P.'s book.

In p. 50, Mr. P. says, "God is now acting up on a principle, which exhibits alike, an inten-

tion to show mercy to some, and to punish* others." Again he says, "The ultimate design of God, in all his works, is the promotion of happiness." Again, in p. 52, "Let it be observed, once more, that the government of God, so far as it is exhibited in this world, is incomplete;—th at is, strict justice is not here rendered to individuals." Again, p. 53, "This first intimation of the nature of the Divine Government, might teach us to expect that justice and mercy should hereafter be set over against each other." If I am capable of understanding the meaning of words, the above logic amounts to the following absurdity:—God is now acting upon the principle, of showing mercy to some, and punishing others. This government of God is incomplete; it is not strictly just. But hereafter justice and mercy will get at loggerheads. If the reader can do better by it, he is at perfect liberty to suit himself. Give me the Bible; that says, (Isa. xlv. 21) "There is no God else beside me; a just God and a Savior." Reader, Mr. P. has got another god, that is, an imaginary one; for the God of the Bible declares, of himself, that he is a just God and a Savior. The god of Mr. P.'s imagination, is a just god and a destroyer. No, that is a contradiction. A just God will save—the Devil is the destroyer—and his preachers are contending for the duration of his Kingdom, and the multitude of his subjects. Apply the simile.

Honor to whom honor is due. In p. 64, Mr. P., speaking of the enemies of orthodoxy, says, "They are not suffered to enjoy the poor comforts of stupidity." It is to be hoped that all unexceptionably moral men, who I presume are the enemies alluded to, will be more charitable to Mr. P. I must confess that I am a little sorry for the disturbance I may occasion to his comfort of stupidity. I have been searching in Mr P.'s book to find something deserving the name of argument. I have found words—declamation—dogmatical assertions—impudent assumptions, and that, which I cannot better classify than by the appellation of clerical cant, and orthodox slang. I must confess, this language seems vulgar; but I see no remedy. With the froward I will show myself froward.

A question is asked by Mr. P. p. 67. "Suppose the doctrine of Universal Salvation true, and what meaning can be attached to all these tremendous judgments? Is it to be credited for a moment, that the flood was a merciful dispensation to remove the inhabitants of the old world to heaven? Was the burning of Sodom designed just to punish its inhabitants, and save their souls eternally?" &c. &c. Now one of two things must be certain. Twice two will make four, or twice two will not make four. Just as certain it is, that God's judgments were merciful dispensations, or they were unmerciful; there is no middle ground on which to place an argument. Mr. P.'s orthodox vindictive justice, is a new idea, got up since the Christian era, to operate as a lever to move and adjust absurdities and contradictions, which beset orthodoxy as thick as the boils did poor Job; and require quite as much patience to get along with them. I know of no stronger evidence of the falsehood of the doctrine of the self-styled orthodox, than the fact, that they cannot find terms in the Bible to designate their tenets, nor language to explain and defend their doctrine. The Bible Christian goes to his Bible. He is satisfied with his Bible. Now the question. Lamentations iv. 6. "For the punishment of the iniquity of the daughter of my people is greater than the punishment of the sin of Sodom, that was overthrown as in a moment, and no hands stayed on her." Here is positive testimony, that the punishment of the

sin of Sodom, was ended with the overthrow, as in a moment. I refer the reader to the whole of Ezek. xvi.

In Lecture iv. Mr. P. undertakes to establish the following proposition:

"UNIVERSALISM DOES NOT PRODUCE A RELIGIOUS LIFE, WHILE THE SYSTEM OPPOSED TO IT DOES PRODUCE GENUINE PRACTICAL PIETY."

He says, "To illustrate and establish this position, let it be observed, first, That the system which holds the doctrine of eternal punishment, leads many persons to come out from the world by an open and public profession of their faith in Christ; but Universalism does not."

I will remark, first, that the words *practical piety*, is a cant phrase, or a leg in the orthodox stool, and is not to be found in the Bible. The term *piety*, occurs but once in the Scriptures, as follows: (1st Tim. v. 4.) "But if any widows have children or nephews, let them learn first to shew piety at home, and to requite their parents; for that is acceptable before God." And I will venture to add, more acceptable than a continual gadding to private meetings. I will admit, that Universalism has very little to do with orthodox notions.

But Mr. P. says, "Universalism does not produce a religious life." I will construe a religious life to signify, a life that is in consonance with the religion taught by Christ and his disciples. I ask Mr. P. how do you know this? Who made you a judge over Universalists? Sir, getting into your pulpit, and fulminating your dogmas, and dunning those who come to hear you, for five dollars, and ten dollars, is not religion. Proof. (James i. 27.) "Pure religion, and undefiled, before God even the Father, is this; to visit the fatherless and widows in their afflictions, to keep himself unspotted from the world." Dare you aver that a belief that "God is the Savior of all men," will not produce this religion? Sir, I speak on behalf of my brethren in the faith of Christ, and say, we make no pretensions to that religion which you are a stickler for, neither do we intend to. Our religion is between our God and ourselves; and we call no man master upon earth. We are accustomed to the aspersions of ignorant pretenders to a superior piety; and expect to receive the same treatment as did those of old like faith, saving when the secular arm shall interpose, and restrain the fury of maddened bigots. Your assertion, that Universalism does not lead the believers in it to come out and make a public profession of their faith, is untrue. The falsehood is too glaring to merit even a simple denial.

In p. 77, Mr. P. says, "That system which holds the doctrine of eternal punishment, leads to a life of prayer; but Universalism does not."

Sir, I am fond of a good recitation, please to listen (Matt. vi. 5—8.) "And when thou prayest, thou shalt not be as the hypocrites are: for they love to pray standing in the synagogues, and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men. Verily I say unto you, they have their reward. But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet; and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father, which seeth in secret, shall reward thee openly. But when ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the Heathen do; for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking. Be not ye therefore like unto them: for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of before ye ask him." Sir, we plead guilty to the charge. Our doctrine does not lead to that prayer which is to be seen of men; consequently, we have not the reward you obtain. Now, Sir, if you possess the power to unveil the closet, and to search the heart, you are qualified to decide; if not, take back your wicked aspersion.

In p. 78, Mr. P. asks, "Who ever heard of an Universalist prayer meeting?" I have, Sir, and attended one, a number of times; where the ene-

mies of Universalists, and of Universalism, were prayed for, "without wrath or doubting," and no doubt their prayers will be answered, and the subjects of them, in due time, become better men.

Again, in p. 79, says Mr. P. "That system which holds the doctrine of eternal punishment leads men to active exertion, to send the gospel to the destitute; but Universalism does not." I must confess Sir, that on the pretence of sending, what you call, the gospel, among the destitute, you and your associates have been very active in begging money from the rich and the poor; but it may be a question in the minds of some, whether the love of souls, or the love of money was uppermost at the time. One thing is too palpably and notoriously evident to need any proof, that if the example of Christ's immediate disciples and apostles shall be the criterion, your conduct in this particular, is far more unworthy, and less justifiable than that of Universalists. Sir, there is a thing in the world called modesty, which you may not be acquainted with, and which would restrain a Universalist from making invidious comparisons; or I perhaps, could name those of that faith, whose exertion has exceeded your own; and who have even refused to receive money for their preaching when offered, to say nothing of a regular system of begging; until it proves so common as to usurp the place of a head of a discourse. I conclude, Sir, on the whole, you had better drop this part of your argument.

H. F.

(To be continued.)

IMPARTIALITY OF GOD.

The following is an extract from a sermon, entitled the "Impartiality of God illustrated and defended," preached at Dublin, April 4th, 1831, by Rev. H. Montgomery, A. M. He was a member of the synod of Ulster, and had, in common with the liberal party, suffered much opposition in consequence of his faith.—*Trumpet*.

"Incidents, trifling in themselves, often leave deeper impressions of religious truth and moral feeling, than folios of divinity. A single wild flower may afford more instruction than a volume of philosophy; and a beautiful landscape may have a greater tendency to raise the soul to God and expand the affections towards man, than all the contents of a library. These sentiments were particularly awakened in my mind one day during the abundant autumn of the year 1827. I had just been reading two small tracts which were circulated with amazing zeal through several Presbyterian Congregations in Ulster. They were principally composed of glaring perversions of Scripture, rude invectives and arrogant assumptions, and the most shocking misrepresentations of the religious tenets of those ministers, who had been bold and honest enough to resist the anti-christian usurpation of the great northern synod. However, there were some grounds, for at least one accusation which they urged against us. One of them charged us with not believing that our heavenly Father is a 'God of vengeance,' and the other with not admitting, that he is 'a God of unextinguishable wrath.' And this slowness of belief was alleged to be the fundamental and prevailing error of the Unitarian system. Still agitated by the recollection of the distressing scenes which I had lately witnessed in the synod of Ulster, disgusted with what I had just read, and rendered gloomy by the dark clouds of bigotry and intolerance, which I perceived rapidly gathering over the Presbyterian church, I walked out in the afternoon, and ascended a neighboring eminence, to seek refreshment for my spirits. It was a glorious day. The sun was bright in the unclouded heavens; an industrious and flourishing town lay at my feet; and on one side the sea was studded with sails conveying an interchange of blessings from land to land; and on the other side, far as the eye could reach,

* The reader will recollect, that by the term *punish*, Mr. P. uniformly means, to damn, to torment, to make endlessly miserable.

'the fields were white unto the harvest.' My walk was cheered by the exhilarating sounds of the peasants, employed in collecting the abundance of nature; the cattle were reclining in peace, or browsing upon the green pastures; myriads of sportive insects were spending the short day of their happy existence around me; and, wherever the eye could turn, the special blessing of heaven seemed to have descended upon earth. Oh! how different did the character of God appear, in the bright and happy world around me, from that in which he was represented in the wretched publications to which I have referred! Standing in the glorious temple of nature, my heart instinctively arose in aspirations of gratitude to 'the Father of mercies'; and ten thousand volumes could not have convinced me, that the author of all the munificence and enjoyment which I beheld, was 'a God of vengeance and unextinguishable wrath.' I reflected too, at the same moment, that it is not alone in the fair and sunny world we are enabled to trace the lines of infinite benignity. I had seen the father of a numerous and helpless family lying in the last stage of a hopeless and afflictive disease: I had spoken to him, as it became my office, of a benevolent Saviour—of the gracious and paternal character of God—of the widow's stay and the orphan's friend—of a future life and a judgment tempered with mercy. And when our hearts and our spirits had ascended together before the throne of grace in humble confidence and fervent prayer, the fixed gaze of despondency was passed away, the calmness of perfect resignation sat upon his brow, the beam of hope illuminated his sunken eye, and his whole countenance seemed to say, 'Father, thy will be done!' Oh, how deeply did I feel, at such a moment, that the blessed Being who thus pours balm into the wounded spirit, and connects the most afflictive sorrows of humanity immediately with its highest and holiest hopes, is not and cannot be 'a God of vengeance and unextinguishable wrath!'

When, after viewing such scenes and cherishing such reflections, I returned to my happy home, with far different feelings from those with which I had left it; and when I was welcomed by the smile of undissembled affection; and when the prattle of my little ones fell upon my heart, refreshing as the dew of heaven upon the thirsty fields, I did not, I could not believe, that all I had witnessed, and all I felt, flowed from the dispensations of 'a God of vengeance and unextinguishable wrath!' No my fellow christians; no. Creed-makers and their victims may attempt to disguise the benignant countenance of the Deity, in the frightful mask of their own selfish and vindictive passions; but the whole animated creation rises up to expose the impiety of the counterfeit, and every unperverted feeling of the human heart revolts from the unlovely object of sectarian veneration."

FROM THE N. Y. MIRROR.
DECEMBER.

December in New-York, if not the pleasantest month in the year, is still sure to furnish us with enjoyments which cannot be tasted at any other season. The christmas holidays commence on the twenty-fifth, when thousands of grateful hearts unite to celebrate the nativity of our blessed Redeemer. "As the closing festival of the year, christmas eclipses all its predecessors in splendor and hilarity; and christmas eve in the city of New-York, exhibits a spectacle, which, to a stranger, must be highly pleasing and imposing. Whole rows of confectionary stores and toy-shops, fancifully and often splendidly, decorated with festoons of bright silk drapery, interspersed with artificial flowers and natural evergreens, are brilliantly illuminated by gas-lights, arranged in every shape and form that fancy can

devise. During the evening, until midnight, these places are crowded with visitors, some selecting toys and fruits for holiday presents; others merely sauntering from shop to shop to enjoy the varied scene. But the most interesting, and, in our estimation, the most delightful sight of all, is the happy and animated countenances of children on this occasion. Their joys cannot be restrained, but burst forth into boisterous mirth, or beam from the countenance in sunny smiles, which are still more expressive. If the weather be fair, music is heard from various quarters, while changing peals from the chiming bells of old Trinity, fall at intervals on the delighted ear."

Our English ancestors always considered christmas in "the double light of a holy commemoration, and a cheerful festival; and accordingly distinguished it by devotion, by vacation from business, by merriment and hospitality." They seemed eagerly bent to make themselves and every body about them happy. The great hall resounded with the tumultuous joys of servants and tenants, and the gambols they played served as amusement to the lord of the mansion and his family; who, by encouraging every act conducive to mirth and entertainment, endeavored to soften the rigor of the season, and mitigate the influence of winter.

On christmas eve, it was customary with our ancestors to light up candles of an uncommon size, and lay a log of wood upon the hearth called a yule-log, to illuminate the house, and as it were, to turn night into day. The custom of decorating their churches and dwellings with evergreen, at this season, is still observed by their descendants, though few have ever investigated its origin. "Among the ancient Romans, the laurel was an emblem of peace, joy, and victory; whence, it has been conjectured, we have taken the custom of dressing up our houses with laurel, as an emblem of joy for the victory gained over the power of darkness, and of that peace on earth, and good will towards man, which the angels sang over the fields of Bethlehem! Other evergreens were subsequently added, with artificial flowers, and such other ornaments, as taste and fancy have successively suggested."

We most cordially agree with the writer just quoted, in the following sentiments:—"Let the external decorations and the superficial forms of this anniversary fade and fall into desuetude; or be replaced with newer glories, as fashion and caprice may dictate; but, let not the spirit of christmas, at once holy and festive, ever evaporate from our feelings or be chilled by a non-observance of this happy season. Let the laurel—the symbol of peace and good-will—be green in our hearts, though it no longer adorn our parlors. A proper observance of the prescribed religious duties, hospitality and social brotherhood; an interchange of love; promoting presents; the festive board; the blazing fire; the moderate bowl, enlivened by music, wit, and song; the harmless sports and pastimes for which none are too old who find a reflected pleasure from delighting the young; or who can renew, even for a single evening, the pleasant memories of their own childhood; but, above all, that enlarged philanthropy, which prompts us to look beyond our own circle of smiling faces, and to light up a similar gladness in the cottages of the poor by acts of charity—these are the observances which every man, to the extent of his ability, is strictly bound to maintain; for they constitute the foundation of that religion which inculcates universal love."

In country places, as has been before observed, where home-born joys must necessarily be resorted to, the christmas holidays, perhaps, afford the highest degree of satisfaction. The gigantic yule-log, a long time previously selected

* Festivals, games, and amusements."

for the purpose, is rolled upon the hearth; and around the crackling flame, soon kindled before it, is placed a plentiful supply of nuts, cake, and sparkling cider, to regale the mirthful circle.

"In all my wanderings through this vale of tears,
From infancy to manhood's riper years,
Whatever pains assailed, or griefs oppress'd
Christmas and New year always saw me blest.
A lengthened absence o'er, how pleasant then
To meet the friends I dearest loved again!
Grasp the warm hand, or share the fond embrace,
And see new smiles lit up in every face.
'Twas christmas-eve—the supper-board was spread,
The fire blazed high, with logs of hickory fed;
The candles, too, unusual lustre lent,
Candles expressly made for this event.
Old tales were told—the cheerful glass went round,
While peals of laughter made the cot resound.
A thousand welcomes hailed the truant boy,
And swift the moments flew on hours of joy;
Till (as they thought, too soon) the hour of prayer
Bade the young urchins to their beds repair;
But first the stocking from each little leg
Must be suspended from a hook or peg,
That *Santaclaus*, who travels all the night,
Might, in the dark, bestow his favors right.
These rites observed—they take a parting kiss,
And go to dream of morning's promised bliss;
Thus did a week of festive pleasures roll,
Till new-year's happy morning crown'd the whole."

FOR THE CHRISTIAN MESSENGER.

THE WHY AND THE WHEREFORE:

OR,

My Creed in four lines.

TEXT:

"The Lord is my portion, saith my soul; therefore will I hope in him."—Lam. iii, 24.

QUESTION.

Why, O, thou sinful son of man,
Whose life will measure but a span,
Whose thoughts and deeds, with sin are leaven'd
Why so strong thy hopes of Heaven?

ANSWER.

The reason why my trust's above,
Is that God's a God of Love;
The Lord's my portion, and my choice,
Therefore, I hope—confide—rejoice.

Conclusion. If God is not a man's portion, why should a man hope in him? If God is a man's portion, then men ought to hope in him.
H. F.

FROM THE N. H. PATRIOT.

Mr. Editor—I would suggest the propriety in offering notes at public religious meetings, requesting prayers for "an ungodly husband," "a drunken wife," "an infidel father," &c. to call the name of the person prayed for, otherwise mistakes may occur to the serious injury of persons whose reputations and standing in society are without exceptions. At the recent four days meeting in this town, a note was offered up, "requesting prayers for the conversion of a man, who is not only opposed to four days meetings, but to every thing that is good."—No one could tell who was meant, and suspicion fixed itself upon half a dozen different individuals, until at last it settled down upon a member of the Temperance Society, who keeps a grocery opposite the State House, and deals largely in *ardent spirits*—a person, whom, I venture to say, no one in town is less obnoxious to a charge of "opposing every thing that is good." The reputation of the innocent ought not to suffer from this species of *public slander*, on account of the sins of the bad, and I therefore suggest that when any more such notes are offered up, the NAME of the wicked person prayed for, be given, to avoid all mistakes.
A FREEWILLER.

Concord, Dec. 13, 1831.

Human beings are composed not of reason only, but of imagination also, and sentiment.

FROM THE CONSTELLATION.

THE TWO FISHERS OF MEN.

An acquaintance of ours, who possesses a great fund of amusing and instructive anecdote, relates the following:—A Reverend gentleman, by the name of Whitney, one of the old pillars of the church in Connecticut, was in the practice of fitting young men for the ministry; and it so happened on one occasion, that two of these pupils finished their theological studies about the same time, and went forth into the world to enter on the duties of their profession.

They were very different in their tempers and their talents. ISAAC was a man of learning and ability; but exceedingly meek and modest withal. EZEKIEL was a person of inferior attainments; but full of self-confidence, noise and fury. The former was mild and gentle, charitable and forgiving; the latter was harsh and overbearing, severe and relentless. The one was contented, if he could win souls to heaven; the other was determined to drive them there.

With these differences in talents and dispositions, they set forth upon their ministry. They travelled and preached. They were indefatigable in discharge of their duties. They were "instant in season and out of season." After having completed a mission of two or three years, they returned to their old master—the Rev. Mr. Whitney.

"Well, Isaac," said the good old man, "how have you succeeded?"

"Beyond my expectations," said the modest disciple; and his countenance brightened as he spoke. "My efforts have been every where met with kindness, and a disposition on the part of my hearers to profit by them."

"You have made some converts then, I suppose?"

"Indeed, I hope no person has been made worse by my preaching; and I think I have reason to believe that many have 'turned from the error of their ways to the wisdom of the just.'"

"I am glad to hear it, Isaac; I am glad with all my heart," said the worthy old man, as he grasped anew the hand of his meek and humble disciple. "And now, Ezekiel," said he, "let me hear what success you have had."

"Ah, sir," returned Ezekiel, with a sigh—"I have had no success at all."

"None at all! I am sorry to hear it."

"So am I sorry to hear it—but it is none the less true for all that. All my efforts have been thrown away—yea, my best efforts have been like pearls cast before swine."

"You have not been idle, of course?"

"Idle! no, I have preached indefatigably; I have labored day and night in reproving and rebuking sin and its perpetrators and abettors. Never for a moment have I spared either the one or the other; never have I opened my mouth, but to warn the wicked of their wickedness, and to point out to them the awful consequences of their estrangement from God and their perseverance in the paths of iniquity. I have set the whole terrors of the law before them in their most frightful shape—I have pictured in the most glowing colors the miseries of the reprobate—I have—"

"No doubt of it—no doubt of it"—interrupted the old man. "That you have abundance of zeal, and warmth, and fire, and all that, I have not the least doubt, Ezekiel. But with all these, how happens it that you have no better success?"

"I don't know, I'm sure," said Ezekiel, with an air of despondency.

"Well, I will tell you. Both you and Isaac here, set out to be 'fishers of men.' In fishing, as in all other employments, some little skill is required to insure success. Isaac has succeeded beyond his expectations; and, I have no doubt, is much the better fisherman of the two."

"May be so," replied Ezekiel, with a mortified air—"but I'm sure I've tried hard enough."

"Granted—but I will show you the difference. Isaac takes a small hair line, with a neat little hook; and makes use of a long, slender pole, that will bend and turn every way with the greatest ease. He approaches the stream without noise, covers his hook with an attractive bait, and carefully dips it in the water. He moves it gently and skilfully to and fro, raise and lowers it alternately, and performs such other manœuvres as judicious anglers best understand. The fish are attracted; they draw around in great numbers, they take the bait one after another; they are dexterously drawn out; and this is the great secret of your friend Isaac's success."

"Now I will give you a picture of your own fishing. You take a stout ten-foot pole; you fasten thereto a cod-line; and to the cod-line you attach an enormous hook, armed with a frightful barb that no bait can cover. Thus prepared, you put upon your hook a live scorpion. 'I must certainly take them now,' say you. Accordingly, you rush to the bank of the stream; you throw in your hook with violence; and frighten all the fish. Not succeeding according to your expectations, you become still more rash and violent. You draw out your hook in a rage, put on another scorpion, and dash it in again with all your might. 'Now,' say you, 'bite, or be damned!—bite, or be damned!'—The poor timid fish flee from you in dismay—and this, friend Ezekiel, is the cause of your want of success."

MISTAKEN OPINIONS.

An eastern journal regrets that a paper of the general usefulness of the *Courier and Enquirer* should take any notice of what are termed fanatics, as such references may injure the cause of religion generally by involving one in the censure applied to the other. We are happy at having an opportunity to explain ourselves on this subject, for while decidedly hostile to bigotry or superstitution, on the one hand, we are as decidedly the friends of sincere and tolerant religion, and undisputed and enlarged morality on the other. When ever danger is apparent either from error in politics, or persecution in religion, it is the duty of the Press to speak openly and fearlessly, for the dangers of the one are not lessened by the demoralizing effects of the other. The history of the world teaches us that great sufferings and sacrifices have been made in the cause of religious freedom, and the history of our own country is in proof that a pilgrimage across the trackless ocean to an unknown land, was preferable to a religious tyranny in a land of civilization and plenty. The secret of the growing power of the Church in this country—the great and increasing strength of the Priesthood, and the ambition and determination to mingle in secular affairs arises from one single but powerful cause: *Money*. The simplicity and beauty in the original Church of Christ arose from its poverty. Sincerity, candor, faith, humility, confidence, patience, and perseverance marked the course of the apostles in the progress of their labors; they endeavored to convince—they tried to persuade; the fashion now is, to order, to command, to overbear, to proscribe, and to denounce—one was all humility, meekness and moderation, the other is pride, pomp, ostentation and obtrusion.

It is a great religious calamity for clerical institutions to be rich—it diverts the thoughts from pure and unalloyed piety to affairs of a temporal nature—it destroys humility, the fountain of religion—it swells the pride of man, and he forgets the obligations of true and sincere devotion in his desire to make that power with which he is invested felt and respected, and his influence commensurate with the extent of the Church possessions. We have not in this coun-

try a Church and State government united; we have no tythes wrung from the poor; no taxes for the support of the Church; no Bishops with immense incomes: these we cannot have because our National Institutions will not permit them to exist; but, in lieu of these legal and organized benefices, we have an indirect system of religious taxation, which answers the same purpose to the interested, and is enormous in its amount. The sums collected for Bible Societies, Missionary Societies, and a great number of similar institutions, are placed in the hands of ministers and laymen for appropriation—the lands and possessions of the Church, the immense sums in legacies, swell the aggregate of clerical wealth, and the very disposal of all this money increases the influence of the Church, until at length we find them stepping from the altar into the Senate House. If religion can produce these annual contributions, it is the interest of the concern to compel people to be religious; hence their anxiety to mingle in every person's business—to stop the mails on Sunday, to force people to be devout, and thus increase their influence and make every thing subservient to this important result.

It is of this departure from the true object of religion of which we complain. Give to these Church governments, and the thousands who live by them, all that they ask, and they will soon govern the State, and their chains will become the most oppressive and galling that man ever sustained; a religious tyranny is the worst of tyrannies. Men differ as to forms of government, but in the diversity of religious opinions, which each adopt with zeal, and many with fanaticism—there is no toleration for a difference of opinion. It is the interest of bigots and fanatics to charge us with a want of religion, when checking their strides to power; it has always been the case, in all countries, where the Church has had the power; it is the argument that sustains them, but it does not, nevertheless, make us irreligious, or they more pious. We are very ready to protect them while they keep within the strict line of their duty, and protect the people from them which they seek to govern under the cloak of religion. Equally, be it understood, are we opposed to that class of unfortunate bigots who pray to the great and ineffable being, "if there is such a being." [Owenism.] We commiserate their doubtful condition, and decry their principles, as much as we do the overzealous and intolerant fanatic, on the other side of the question. We wish to be rightly understood, not misrepresented and censured from misapprehensions.—*Courier and Enquirer*.

FROM THE GOSPEL ANCHOR.

POSTSCRIPT.

We understand the forces are marshalling for another revival crusade in this city, (Albany,) during the coming winter. Some of the churches have commenced the preparatory exercises of prayer meetings at 5 o'clock in the morning. When the soldiers are properly instructed in the art and science of spiritual warfare, we suppose the battle will commence with great fury and what the result will be, we are unable to predict. Most probably, however, some additions will be made to the black catalogue of maniacs and suicides: some silly women will be led captive, and some children frightened into the church. We shall keep a watchful eye on these "pharisees who compass sea and land to make one proselyte," and shall give the earliest notice of the success of their warfare. We shall expect "Peter the Scribe" to keep a faithful journal of the proceedings, and make report accordingly.

"If there's a hole in a' your coats,
I rede ye tent it;
A chiel's amang you taking notes,
And, faith, he'll prent it." W.

CHRISTIAN MESSENGER.

EDITED BY T. J. SAWYER AND P. PRICE.

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 24, 1831.

ERRATA.

In our last number, page 49, second column, twenty-fourth line from top, instead of "Essays on the Distinguished traits of Christian Character," read, "Essays on the *Distinguishing* traits," etc. Third column, in a part of the edition, the following: instead of "not reckon, on account, mankind as guilty," read, "not reckon *or* account," etc. in line twenty-ninth from bottom of page. In page 50, column first, line thirty-six, from bottom, instead of "justification for life," read "justification of life." In same column, thirteenth line from bottom, instead of "an indispensable free requisite," read "an indispensable *pre-requisite*."

FREE WILL.

Among the several points of difference, existing between our Methodist and Calvinist friends, it is well known, that few are regarded of more vital importance, or have been more urgently insisted upon by the former, than free will. In their zeal to subvert, or more properly to annihilate, the doctrine of Decrees, so obnoxious to their keen sense of moral accountability, they have often charged it, if we are not mistaken, with supposing the human mind, with all its powers and volitions, directly under the immediate guidance of God, or in other words, as a mere machine, operating according to the fixed principles of its construction. They manifest a becoming horror and a righteous indignation at the revolting idea, that God should, from eternity, doom some of his intelligent creatures to endless misery; and to counteract such false teaching, which represents this unhappy fate of man independent of any personal blame, they are loud in their declarations, that *all men may be saved if they will*, and that *if any are damned, it is their own fault*.

Such language, in its ordinary, we might say, its universal acceptation, certainly implies, that it is in human power

"To escape from hell, and fly to heaven;" and, of course, it has generally been represented as one of the greatest sources of mental anguish in the world of wo, that the sinner would there be left to reflect on the free and frequent offers of mercy, which he had slighted. Affecting pictures are often drawn of the unspeakable agony, the "deep damnation," which the thought will always bring to the soul of the wretched sinner, that he had wilfully trampled on the cross of Christ, and contemned the blood of him who died for a world's salvation. An examination, however, of the real sentiments of the Methodist Episcopal Church, will convince us that this is a misapprehension of their opinions, and that how much soever they may talk of *free will* and *human ability*, their creed most plainly denies man the possession of any such attributes.

It may be interesting to our readers to see the article of Methodist faith on this point, in the language in which that Church chooses to clothe its own sentiments, and we present it with the

full conviction, that it will abundantly sustain our preceding remark. It is found Chap. 1. Sec. ii, Art. 8, of "The Doctrines and Discipline of the Methodist Episcopal Church."

"Of free will.—The condition of man after the fall of Adam is such, that he cannot turn and prepare himself, by his own natural strength and works, to faith and calling upon God; wherefore we have no power to do good works, pleasant and acceptable to God, without the grace of God by Christ preventing us, that we may have a good will, and working with us, when we have that good will."

In the above curious article it is clearly implied, 1st. That man, before his fall, possessed a *free will*.—2d. That at the fall he lost it.—3d. That now he has neither will nor power to wish or do any thing but evil. It requires no great discrimination to see that such a being is *totally depraved* by nature, and of course cannot be accountable. Because it is worse than folly to say that man is free to act as he pleases while he has no power to will or act but one way. As well might we contend that the North River is *free* to run north or south as it pleases, while at the same time we acknowledge it impossible for it to pursue any but a southerly course. And as man is *totally depraved*, can neither will or act well, it follows of course that he could never of himself become better, and that the grace, which shall convert him, must be superior to his corrupted nature, and in every case absolutely irresistible.

What then is this boasted free will of which our Methodist brethren say so much? Why it is—nothing, just nothing. Man is free to will evil, but not good—free to reject the gospel, but not to receive it, free to go to hell but not to heaven. From such freedom, "Good Lord deliver us."

S.

THE CATECHISM.

Though consistency is not a certain sign of truth, contradiction is an infallible proof of error. Two witnesses may agree in their testimony on any point, and yet both be false; but they cannot contradict each other without one, at least, being so. Thus with systems of faith, they may begin and end in error, and yet be consistent, but when they contradict themselves, we know that they cannot be true.

We will point out two or three things in the Presbyterian Catechism, which to us are either mysteries or contradictions.

"Q. 1. What is the chief and highest end of man?"

A. Man's chief and highest end is to glorify God, and fully to enjoy him forever."

Very good. This the Universalist believes as heartily as any Presbyterian in America. Recollect, kind reader, what is man's chief end, viz: "to glorify God, and FULLY TO ENJOY HIM FOREVER." Now for another testimony.

"Q. 13. What hath God especially decreed concerning angels and men?"

A. God by an eternal and immutable decree, out of his mere love, for the praise of his glorious grace, to be manifested in due time, hath elected some angels to glory; and, in Christ,

hath chosen some men to eternal life, and the means thereof; and also, according to his sovereign power, and the unsearchable counsel of his own will (whereby he extendeth or withholdeth favor as he pleaseth,) hath passed by, and foreordained the rest to dishonor and wrath, to be for their sin inflicted, to the praise of the glory of his justice."

No Presbyterian *dares* deny, that by "dishonor and wrath," is here meant *endless misery in hell*. The question then arises, whether to *suffer endless misery in hell*, is "*fully to enjoy God forever*?" If not, then these men will never answer the end of their creation. But this again contradicts what is said above, that God by his "eternal and immutable decree fore-ordained" them: to this very state, and created them, of course, *on purpose* to suffer it. We would like some of our Presbyterian friends to tell us, whether this is a high mystery, or a palpable contradiction of which a schoolboy should be ashamed.

"Q. 150. Are all transgressions of the law of God equally heinous in themselves, and in the sight of God?"

A. All transgressions of the law of God are not equally heinous; but some sins in themselves, and by reason of several aggravations, are more heinous in the sight of God than others."

Now for the counterpart.

"Q. 152. What doth every sin deserve at the hands of God?"

A. Every sin, even the least, being against the sovereignty, goodness, and holiness of God, and against his righteous law, deserveth his wrath and curse, both in this life, and that which is to come."

The same doctrine is also clearly taught in the "Confession of Faith," chap. vi, sec. 6. "Every sin, both original and actual, being a transgression of the righteous law of God, and contrary thereunto, doth, in its own nature, bring guilt upon the sinner, whereby he is bound over to the wrath of God, and curse of the law, and so made subject to death, with all miseries spiritual, temporal, and eternal." Now we are really anxious that some "sound Presbyterian" should inform us how one sin can be more heinous in itself, and in the sight of God, than another, while *even the least*, original or actual, deserves "*all miseries, spiritual, temporal, and eternal*." And we should like to know how God, (whom the Scriptures declare to be a *just* God, and who "renders to every man according to his work,") can ever adequately punish the more heinous sins, and especially the multitude of them committed by some men, since *all* the miseries of *eternity* will only reward an individual for the most trivial sin of which he can be guilty? Let Presbyterians answer.

S.

LOGICAL REASONING.

We are often amused, as well as astonished, at the puerile sophistry, into which great minds sometimes fall, and which they dignify by the name of reasoning. That it is not *carnal reasoning*, of which we hear so much, there can be no doubt. We will give a specimen. It was formerly popular, and we think not altogether unfashionable at the present day, to reason in

this manner. Endless misery is the just punishment of sin, because sin is infinite. And sin is infinite, because the Divine law is infinite, of which sin is a transgression. And the law is infinite because it is given by an infinite Lawgiver.

By a similar method of argument, we might prove with equal certainty, that every thing in the universe is infinite. If the moral law, formed for the regulation of human conduct, is infinite, because given by an infinite Lawgiver, the wing of a fly, for the same reason, may be infinite, because made by an infinite Creator. That God is infinite, no one will dispute; but that his law, which he has enjoined on frail and ignorant man, is so, is but a childish assumption without a shadow of proof; and that an infraction of that law is an infinite sin, deserving an infinite or endless punishment, is, we think, little less than supposing man equal to his maker. It would seem to us, that the fallacy of such reasoning, if reasoning it must be called, is too obvious to every mind to pass undetected. S.

FOR THE CHRISTIAN MESSENGER.

For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.

Matt. xviii. 20.

Messrs. Editors.—The foregoing was taken as a text at the Grand-street Universalist Church on Sunday morning the 11th inst. Whether the speaker intended it as a motto to his discourse or a subject of elucidation I know not. I should judge, however, that he intended it as a motto, as he said nothing how it is that Jesus is made manifest at those meetings. As the subscriber has many times known this text to be the subject of discourse, and never had the satisfaction of hearing the opinion of any preacher on this part of it, he would ask Mr. Sawyer to give his views of it in the columns of the Christian Messenger. I would remark, however, that I am satisfied for myself as to its import, but would like to know whether your opinion corresponds with mine on that point.

Yours, &c.

Z. S.

New-York, December 12, 1831.

REPLY.

The apostles, to whom the promise under consideration was made, probably enjoyed the presence of Christ in a more direct way or in a higher sense than we are now to expect. To all, however, who assemble with just views and proper feelings for the worship of God, we believe, Christ will be graciously present; not indeed personally, nor by the direct and sensible agency of the Holy Ghost, as in the case of the apostles, but in the doctrines he has taught—in the fellowship with christians and the communion with God, which the believer enjoys—in the hope and peace and joy his religion affords. In fine, Christ is present in every religious truth that is inculcated, in every prayer that is offered, in every duty that is enjoyed, in every christian hope that is excited. It is his word that instructs and sanctifies. It is he that has consecrated a new and living way by which we may gain access to the throne of God's grace. He is our Master and Advocate. When we assemble, therefore, believing Christ to be, and receiving him as, the messenger of God to man, and under God, as our Master, and King, and Savior, which seems to us to be coming together in his name, we think, he will be present by his truth and spirit to own and bless. S.

CHRISTIAN HONESTY.

"For I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ." Rom. i. 16.

The character of Paul, who penned this language, forms a singular contrast with that of too many individuals at the present day. Educated

in the strictest sect of the Pharisees, devoted to the traditions of his fathers and the prejudices of his party, commended by the Elders and Chief Priests, he had early in life enlisted in their persecutions of Christ and his disciples. He had become "exceedingly mad," shut up the saints in prison, and compelled them to blaspheme, and when they were put to death he gave his voice against them. At length, convinced of his error, Paul became, from one of the bitterest enemies, one of the most efficient advocates of the Gospel of Jesus. He freely sacrificed every thing he once held dear—his rank, his popularity, his character,—for its glorious truths. His reputation, in the opinion of his former friends and flatterers, was irretrievably lost; so that he who but yesterday, claimed and received their hearty plaudits, was to-day the subject of their maledictions and revenge.

In these days of perfect security, we are unprepared to judge of the feelings of one like Paul, in view of the multiplied dangers he incurred by changing his faith. He clearly saw, that bonds and afflictions awaited him, that trials and stripes were henceforth to be his familiars.—But he shrunk not from his duty, and would not belie his conscience or deny his Lord, for the paltry considerations of human applause and personal safety. He loved the praise of God more than the praise of men, and, therefore, was not ashamed of the gospel of Christ. Oh, how unlike, in almost every thing, thousands of the present day!—thousands who fear to avow their real sentiments, because forsooth there is a father, or a mother, or a wife, or a friend, who would *dislike* it—thousands who are ashamed of the gospel of Christ, and who will sooner deny the Lord that bought them, than be honest and confess, that he is "the Savior of the world," a faith, which at worst, can only expose them to the scorn of hypocrites, and to the contemptible charge of being *unpopular*. The Apostle knew too well the value of a truth, in attestation of which his Master laid down his life, to trifle with it because it was unpopular. He felt, too, that it was not likely to become popular while it was unknown, and with a martyr spirit he stood up in its defence, without a single pulsation of fear or thrill of shame, notwithstanding it cost him a seat in the Synagogue, and the friendship and approbation of hypocritical Scribes and Pharisees. S.

MODERN REVIVALS.

"By their fruits ye shall know them."

"*Fanaticism*."—Under this head, a certain class of political papers are fond of gathering up every rumor, every *caricatura* description, every lying fable, that can be put forth, calculated to throw contempt upon religion, its professors, or the means of its advancement. Revivals, and revival measures, and especially protracted meetings, are the subjects of their special hatred.

We have been again politely favored by a friend, with a perusal of the Evangelist, from which we extract the preceding paragraph. It appears to have been called forth, by the numerous accounts of religious Fanaticism, Deliriums and Suicides, which many of our public journals have dared to present to the public, as a solemn warning to the community, against the desolations which mark the course of present religious excitements, and particularly in reference to an article from the Haverhill Chronicle, respecting a Mr. Porter, an account of which will be found in our 4th No. Though ours may not be classed as a 'Political Paper,' yet as we have recorded, under the caption which heads this article, repeated instances of mental aberration, suicides, and murders, which have been supposed to proceed from religious excitements, we may reasonably expect to come in for a share of Br. Leavitt's denunciations, and shall therefore be

excused for taking some brief notice of them. We give below, Mr. Porter's letter in refutation of the report. There is something peculiarly strange and unaccountable to us, in the circumstance, that of the number, we had almost said thousands, of instances reported of this kind, but this solitary one should be adverted to, and yet the friends and advocates of measures evidently producing these results, charge us with a fondness "of gathering up every rumor—every LYING fable" "to throw contempt on Religion!" Admitting the case of Mr. Porter was misapprehended, there are numberless others, which we presume they dare not attribute to other causes—at least they do not deny them; and from Mr. P.'s own confessions, that he was laboring under "mental aberration," (though he says from different causes,) is it at all surprising that it should be placed to the same account? and could it not reasonably be done without subjecting one to the charge of being possessed of the worst of dispositions? We really think so, unless feelings are far more closely wedded to party purposes and objects, than to an honest acknowledgment of causes and their effects. In some remarks immediately preceding the extract from Mr. Porter's letter, Br. Leavitt observes: "Look now to the truth of the case, and let the religious community *entirely* cease to put confidence in those who delight in circulating slanders against revivals. They do not care for the truth, if they can only injure Jesus Christ, and his cause among men."

We are ever disposed to exercise all possible charity towards the profession and practice of our fellow creatures, but when we meet with language like the foregoing, and especially under such circumstances, what are we to think of it? What conclusions can any honest man draw from the conduct of those who make such sweeping declarations, and in the very face too, of such a mass of evidence to the contrary. Among hundreds of cases, here is a single instance selected, and one probably the least aggravated throughout the melancholy catalogue, on which to ground a denial of the whole, and affix on the reporters of them (many of whom, we doubt not, are as honest and sincere christians as Mr. L. and his adherents,) a charge of *slander, recklessness of truth, a disposition to injure Jesus Christ—to circulate lying fables, and to bring contempt on religion*—mete language, we should judge, for a professing christian. If these statements originate in such unworthy and base motives, if they are so palpably false and so wholly destitute of foundation in truth, why not go forward at once and expose their iniquitous character, by facts and circumstances; or at least a sufficient proportion of them, to give a questionable character to the whole. This could be easily done, if the promulgators of them are deserving of the heavy charges here preferred against them. Unlike their opposers, these Journals have ever come out frankly and openly with "names, places and dates," or a professed willingness to give them, whenever called for, thus placing immediately within the reach of ALL, the means of a thorough examination. And if the representations are of such a slanderous and abominable character, why, we repeat, are they not investigated, and their falsity exhibited in the most effectual manner to the world? Simply, we must believe until other evidence is furnished, because it would be a dangerous subject for them to investigate. In the progress of its examination, a picture of desolation and ruin, appalling to every benevolent heart, would be laid more open, if possible, to public view.

The accounts of insanity and suicide already published, probably bear but a small proportion to those which actually exist in our country. But few of our public journals have shown a disposition to come out with the real facts in

these cases; and even when they have, many instances have been withheld, from motives of delicacy and friendship towards acquaintance and connexions. And yet, they are gravely accused of eagerness in "gathering up every rumor, every lying fable that can be put forth, calculated to throw contempt upon religion, its professors, or the means of its advancement;" with what degree of propriety, a discerning public, we believe, will righteously determine. Even our own city could probably give an exhibition, that ought to draw a blush upon the face of Br. Leavitt, in view of such unchristian charges. But to facts within our own knowledge. As participants in this alleged "lying scene," we feel bound to state them; and would inform Br. Leavitt, that we are at this moment in possession of no less than five cases of insanity, which we believe have never been given to the public, all evidently the effects of religious excitement. Two in Chester, Mor. Co. N. J., and three in Norwalk, Conn. and vicinity. Names can be furnished Br. Leavitt if he desires them. The two in Chester, we are informed on credible authority, are very respectable females, and are now, and have been for sometime, suffering all the horrors of insanity; from religious excitement, we have good reason to believe, for, previous to their attendance on these modern meetings, they were rational and happy beings. With the cases at Norwalk, we have been long and more particularly acquainted, and have thus far forbore to notice them, from feelings of regard to friends and connexions, with whom we have been intimately acquainted; and should not now do it, did we not deem it necessary to repeat accusations like those we are considering. One of the cases is that of a wife and a mother, who early last spring became *awakened*, and *experienced religion*, as the saying is, but from the awful requirements made of her, (before she could visibly unite in the service of a God of Love,) in a preparatory Sermon to the public admission of Church members, she became alarmed for her safety, doubted her interest in the purposes of a Savior, and within a few days became a perfect maniac. In her ravings, sometimes she was in heaven, and sometimes in hell; sometimes her own name was recorded in the Book of Life; and her husband's, or perhaps some, or all of her children's were not to be found there—at others, the scene would be changed, and her own could not be found; in either case, she would break out in piteous moans of despair. She has now been for months an inmate of the Insane Retreat at Hartford, Conn. and at the last information, which is recent, there was little prospect of her ever overcoming the shock. We speak not without personal knowledge and feelings on this subject. We have long been acquainted with the family, and have indulged for them the highest regard. We have known the unfortunate person of whom we speak, as a kind, affectionate, and exemplary woman, possessing that nice sense of rectitude of purpose, which would probably lead her as soon to part with her right hand as to intentionally do a fellow creature wrong. Equally strong reasons have we for believing her a kind and affectionate wife and mother. Yet from the appalling character, which has been impressed upon her mind, of her Father in Heaven, she has been reft of reason, and now presents one of the most melancholy spectacles—the WRECK OF THE HUMAN MIND. It has pained us to the heart, to witness the desolations spread through that once happy circle—the husband, as it were, worse than companionless, and the children worse than motherless. The wife and mother lives, it is true, but dead to them. We have communed with the husband—we can feel for the sorrows of his situation, and though he sees not as we see, yet we devoutly pray God she may be speedily restored to herself, to him, and her family, and more especially

to a confidence in the good purposes of that Being, who is kind even to "the unthankful and the evil."

We may be accused also of a "fondness" in dwelling on these scenes, as well as of an eagerness in circulating "lying fables." Be it so. The arbitrary bestowment of names does not alter principles. We have for years cherished little desire for the applause of men, except so far as it may be grounded on what we conceive to be an honest discharge of duty; and so long as we remain satisfied with ourselves, (and we believe there is a rule, which if strictly adhered to, will not lead us far from the path of duty) we shall not hesitate to go forward in the course we have marked out—one which, however we may err in opinion, we conceive to be absolutely required of us, as conductors of a public journal, in these days of well grounded apprehension. We remarked in the introduction to our public labors, that "we regarded the present as an important period, one requiring energy and decision, on the part of liberal christians," and our daily experience confirms the impressions. And can any reasonable person doubt their propriety, in view of a spirit and language, like that given from the Evangelist?—when men, under the imposing sanction of religion, show a disposition to block up every avenue of public investigation, even at the expense of moral or christian honesty? They do not, it is true. use the strong arm of the law, for it is not available, but if we can judge from such measures as these, they would resort to a no less effectual one, if successful—that of destroying all confidence in every organ of public communication, which should presume to scan their measures and practices. If theirs is the cause of truth and justice, why not court investigation, instead of dealing out wholesale denials and hard names. Is this honest—is it Christ like?—If we are reasonable beings, let us have facts and arguments. Truth will never suffer by examination. And we should say, measures that would not bear this test, are unworthy the support and confidence of any one. But we have extended this article much beyond our first intention, and would offer but one query to Br. L. in conclusion. Does he ever recollect of having read, "Therefore, all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them, for this is the law and the prophets." P.

Extract from Mr. Porter's Letter.

"That I attended said meeting, I cheerfully admit; that I there became simple enough to believe that it is the duty of man to submit his own will to the will of his Creator, and that I then and there determined, that with God's blessing, I would endeavor to make his will my rule of action, is equally true. If this is "fanaticism," I am proud of being thought worthy of the appellation.

That I have, since my conversion, in consequence of too close application of mind, to the investigation of a subject, which had little more to do with the matter of my conversion than a question of mathematics would have—had a brain fever, attended with a partial aberration of mind is also admitted. A few days of rest and quiet, have, however, fully restored me to health in mind and body. Yours, JOHN S. PORTER."

FOR THE CHRISTIAN MESSENGER.

Of all the desires of the human mind, there are perhaps none more active in its exercise, than that of perpetual existence. Who that ever suffered the chilling reflection that it were possible to cease to exist, that had not all the finer senses of his imagination aroused, and met, at the very threshold of the suggestion, a power of evidence in his own feelings, which imprinted deep conviction on the mind that such is not our end, the very thoughts of which find no com-

munion with the high anticipations of our nature. Blessed be the author of our existence for this precious endowment, which contradicts direct, this phantom of a crazed imagination. Annihilation! thou bane to human happiness, where is thy home, thy native dwelling place, where the stepping stone that aided thee to rear thy dreary head, and beckon to thy death cold shore the unwary traveller, indulging in his journey through life, a confidence in a happy existence beyond the grave—a confidence desired at the first dawning of our mental faculties. How often do we hear the interrogation from lips so young that they can scarce articulate, "where shall I live, when I die?" Here, fell destroyer of our dearest hopes, thou mightest learn a lesson, but for the aid of man's unnatural genius, that would consign thee to the dark and dreary abodes of forgetfulness. But thou hast an agent powerful in its influence, wielded by the voice of oratory, written with the pen of demonic ingratitude, armed, thrice doubly armed with talons of destruction:—'tis sounding from ear to ear, from house to house, from shore to shore, it has shed the blood, and kindled the fagots to destroy martyred thousands—it is that which gave the birth, it has been thy nursing mother, it has enabled thee to rise until thou art seen, aye, too visibly seen, spreading thy pestiferous influence over our happy land. Yes, "annihilation," thou art its offspring, its darling child. Thy parents name is "ENDLESS MISERY." Here pause and feast thy imagination on that which ushered thee into existence, that held thee with its iron grasp, until thou, with all thy horrors, became disgusted with thy ancestry—burst the chains that bound thee and spread thyself, with all thy deformity before the world, and asked to be preferred to that which gave thee birth, and well art thou succeeding, and fast wilt thou increase, so long as our intellectual atmosphere is tainted by the heatings of thy worthy parentage. But we believe thy time is short. We can discover the light of divine truth bursting forth, and borne on by soldiers disciplined in the school of truth. They have attacked the citadel of thy retreat, and ere long we trust that shelterless will be thy condition. Endless misery is sick—its groans are heard at assemblies for from 4 to 20 days in succession, and but here and there a solitary life giving cordial is found to palliate its ravings.

We think the time not far distant, when we shall be enabled to witness the last drop gushing from its expiring vitals, and view it only in records of the past, as a faithful beacon for the future.

J. B. W.

How much pains have those evils cost us which never happened.

* * C. P. O. is received, and will appear next week.

DIED.

In this city, on Saturday last, ELIZA JANET, daughter of Jeremiah Dodge, Esq. aged 11 years.

LETTERS AND REMITTANCES.

Received at this office, ending December 21st.
P. Master, Reading, Pa.; P. Master, New-Brunswick, N. J.; P. Master, Marietta, Pa.; Rev. T. F. Reading, Pa.; Doct. J. W. L. Cranberry, N. J. \$2; J. M'C. J. C. W. each \$2, of Peekskill, N. Y.; H. H. Chester, N. J. \$1; C. D. Jr. Riverhead, L. I. \$1.

RELIGIOUS NOTICES.

Br. S. J. HILLYER will preach at Middleville, 25th inst. and at the Academy, in Camp-town, in the evening.—At Mamaroneck, Saturday evening, Dec. 31st.—At Saw Pitt, Sunday, January 1st, 1832, and at Rye, in the evening of the same day.

FOR THE CHRISTIAN MESSENGER.

THE LORD'S PRAYER.

Our Father who in heaven doth reign,
 Forever hallowed be thy name;
 Thy glorious kingdom come,
 Thy will be done from shore to shore,
 On earth, as heaven, where all adore,
 The Father through the Son.

Give us our daily bread this day,
 Forgive our debts, dear Lord we pray
 As we our debtors do;
 Lead us not in temptation's path,
 Deliver us from sin and wrath,
 And every evil too.

For thine's the kingdom, Lord, we know,
 The power and glory thine also;
 Beyond all mortal ken,
 Ever and ever to endure,
 Firm and eternally secure,
 Forever more, Amen.

UNIVERSAL SUPPLICATIONIST.

Stamford, Conn.

THE ROSE OF MAY.

I said the flower would bloom no more,
 That wither'd yesterday;
 That morning dews would ne'er restore
 My lovely rose of May.
 The future was too cold a thing
 In my sweet dream to be;
 The present rose, the present spring,
 Are all of life to me.

I do remember well my grief,
 When died my flower—and then
 My joy, when time brought, leaf by leaf,
 As sweet a flower again.
 And then I said, "Farewell despair,
 Thou art no guest for me;
 What e'er I lose of bright or fair,
 I hope again to see."

Alas! I've often wept since then,
 And death has robb'd my bowers;
 But even amidst the griefs of men,
 I've comfort found in flowers.
 For, if the bloom of love be brief,
 And if Fame's crown be riven,
 I would not mourn life's fading leaf,
 But look for spring in heaven.—Crane.

THE SOLITAIRE.

There is a calm, unearthly feeling that pervades the soul, at the still hour of midnight, when universal nature is slumbering in the arms of repose; when the busy and the bustling scenes of joy are over, and the mind, collected within itself, feels the bright glow of intellectual joy, which is known only to the sentimental and refined. The soul as if freed from the clod of sense that bound it within the stunted, sphere of earth, mounts exulting on the wings of fancy, and traverses those regions of light and glory, those luminous worlds that sparkle far off in the wide expanse of unlimited space, where spirits all stainless as the snow drop on the cheek of innocence and beauty dwell, and watch perhaps the thought that stirs within the breast of him that gazes on the radiant glory of their dazzling sphere.

But there is a spot in which this hour is doubly sweet to him who delights in solitude: there is a spot on which the soul that loves to hold converse with angels and talk with the mystic spheres of heaven, delights at the lone hour of midnight to rove. That spot is the grave-yard.

There is a holy pleasure, that comes across the soul, a solemn joy, unadulterated with the coarser joys of earth; luxury of feeling, mixed with tender sadness, which makes that feeling still more sweet. We gaze upon the marble columns which through the dimness of the night, break on our sight as spectres from the tomb below. No breath is stirring; no breeze comes o'er the lawn; no echo breaks on the ear, to awake the reverie of the heaven-wrapped wan-

derer. We gaze upon some of the tombs that perhaps contain all that's left of some loved companion of our earlier days; we look up to some bright star that glows in ether, perhaps the palace of that soul released from clay.

Perhaps a mother's last remains lie slumbering in the grave; she who has nursed us in our infant hours, has cradled us in her bosom, and lulled us in the arms of repose; that mother who looked complaisantly on our juvenile sports, and anxiously watched over us in the hours of sickness. A father too, may lie there;—a brother, with whom we have spent our earlier hours, and sportively worn away our youthful moments. Perhaps we stop to meditate beside a sister's grave, and shed a tear to one we held most dear.

But yet amidst our grief, with a complaisant smile we may look upward to the bright glittering moon that sheds her influence on our souls, we may gaze on some lone wandering spot of light, in which our friend a seraph now of the highest order dwells. There, no grief comes across his spirit; no sorrows as formerly, cloud his brow, but all is calm, and unalloyed, unearthly transport; all is that sweet and even rich luxury of the soul, that saints and angels, in the realms of light may feel, but words too faintly tell.

Ah! well may we, as beside their graves we sit and weep, look up and rejoice. We smile as if we gazed upon their forms, and fain with angel wings would fly to dwell forever in the holy sphere. We think ourselves unconscious that we dwell in flesh, as spirits freed from earth, mounting upwards to the realms of love and light. 'Tis very heaven; the ground on which we stand is fancied Paradise.

Ah! who would not, in such a scene as this, delight to spend the gloomiest hours of night, and hold communion with the sons of God; expand each thought to heaven, and leave, though for a moment, and in fancy too, this earth that chains him from the joys above.

THE ROSE.—MRS. SIGOURNEY.

I saw a rose perfect in beauty; it rested gracefully upon its stalk, and its perfume filled the air. Many stopped to gaze upon it, many bowed to taste its fragrance, and its owner hung over it with delight. I passed it again, and behold it was gone—its stem was leafless—its root had withered; the enclosure which surrounded it was broken down. The spoiler had been there; he saw that many admired it; he knew it was dear to him who planted it, and beside it he had no other plant to love. Yet he snatched it secretly from the hand that cherished it; he wore it on his bosom till it hung its head and faded, and when he saw that its glory was departed, he flung it rudely away. But it left a thorn in his bosom, and vainly did he seek to extract it; for now it pierces the spoiler, even in his hour of mirth. And when I saw that no man, who had loved the beauty of the rose, gathered again its scattered leaves, or bound up the stalk which the hands of violence had broken, I looked earnestly at the spot where it grew, and my soul received instruction. And I said, let her who is full of beauty and admiration, sitting like the queen of flowers in majesty among the daughters of women, let her watch lest vanity enter her heart, beguiling her to rest proudly upon her own strength; let her remember that she standeth upon slippery places, "and be not high minded, but fear."

EVENING.

There are two periods in the life of man in which the evening hour is peculiarly interesting—in youth and in old age. In youth, we love it for its mellow moonlight, its million of stars, its then rich and soothing shades, its still serenity; amid these we can commune with our loves, or twine the wreaths of friendship while there is

none to bear us witness but the heavens and the spirits that hold their endless sabbath there, or look into the deep bosom of creation spread abroad like a canopy above us, and look and listen, and we can almost see and hear the waving winds and melting songs of other worlds. To youth, evening is delightful, it accords with the flow of his light spirits, the fervor of his fancy, and the softness of his heart. Evening also is the delight of virtuous age, it affords hours of undisturbed contemplation, it seems an emblem of the calm and tranquil close of busy life, serene, placid and mild, with the impress of its great Creator stamped upon it; it spreads its quiet winds over the grave, and seems to promise that all shall be peace beyond it.

To secure thy content, look upon those thousands, with whom thou wouldst not for any interest, change thy fortune and condition.

Human virtue is like the dying dolphin, exhibiting its most beautiful colors in distress.

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Publisher and Editor.

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